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NSF AWARDS \$19,400 TO UM
FOR SOLAR LABORATORY

MISSOULA--

The National Science Foundation (NSF) has awarded \$19,400 to the Department of Physics and Astronomy at the University of Montana in Missoula for the development of a solar laboratory, Dr. Thomas E. Margrave Jr., associate professor of astronomy at UM, has announced.

Margrave, director of the project, said the addition of a solar laboratory to scientific facilities at UM will "significantly" upgrade the amount of actual observing experience provided in the astronomy laboratory and will place more emphasis on solar astronomy in the astronomy curriculum offered on the Missoula campus. The University will provide matching funds for the NSF grant.

The heart of the solar laboratory, according to Margrave, is a 12-inch vertical heliostat which will reflect a beam of light from the roof of the UM Science Complex into the astronomy laboratory, where it will be observed by three major systems. The heliostat "tracks" the sun as it moves across the sky by means of what Margrave termed "an intricate clockwork system." Margrave also noted that other bright celestial bodies such as the moon, stars and planets will also be observed via the heliostat.

An additional feature of the solar laboratory will be a monitoring system that will allow important solar events such as eclipses, sunspots and solar flares to be viewed on a television screen. Margrave said that he plans to have the TV screen in the lobby of the Science Complex for viewing by all interested persons.

The diversity of the solar laboratory will make possible a wide variety of solar observational projects suitable for elementary as well as advanced studies. Margrave said about 1,900 University students are expected to be affected over the next five years by the addition of the solar laboratory at UM.

The grant expiration date is May 31, 1977.